

21/21. International environmental governance

The Governing Council,

Underlining the importance of the World Summit on Sustainable Development to be held in 2002 to review the outcome of the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development, to reinvigorate the global commitment to sustainable development and, as a critical opportunity to advance international cooperation for sustainable development on the basis of concrete commitments at the highest level,

Recalling General Assembly resolution 55/200 in which the Assembly stressed the important role that the United Nations Environment Programme has to play in the ten year review of progress achieved in the implementation of the outcome of the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development,

Recalling the Nairobi Declaration in which the role of the United Nations Environment Programme is confirmed as the leading global environmental authority that sets the global environmental agenda, that promotes the coherent implementation of the environmental dimension of sustainable development within the United Nations system and that serves as an authoritative advocate for the global environment,

Welcoming efforts already made to realise the objectives of the Nairobi Declaration, as well as the implementation of General Assembly resolution 53/242 and the subsequent establishment of the Global Ministerial Environment Forum, the Environmental Management Group and the strengthening of the United Nations Office at Nairobi,

Recognizing that these reforms constitute first steps in a process of necessary streamlining and strengthening of the system of international environmental governance including in the context of sustainable development with the objective of enhancing policy coherence and implementation,

Emphasizing that stable, predictable and adequate funding is a prerequisite for improved governance and should constitute a central aspect of deliberations on improving international environmental governance,

Recalling the recommendations from the Malmö Ministerial Declaration that the 2002 conference should review the requirements for a greatly strengthened institutional structure for international environmental governance based on an assessment of future needs for an institutional architecture that has the capacity to effectively address wide-ranging environmental threats in a globalizing world, and that United Nations Environment Programme's role in this regard should be strengthened and its financial base broadened and made more predictable,

1. Calls upon the United Nations Environment Programme and member governments of the United Nations and its specialised agencies to intensify efforts to implement General Assembly resolution 53/242 as a basis for further institutional strengthening;

2. Decides to establish an open-ended Intergovernmental Group of ministers or their representatives, with the Executive Director as an ex-officio member, to undertake a comprehensive policy-oriented assessment of existing institutional weaknesses as well as future needs and options for strengthened international environmental governance, including the financing of the United Nations Environment Programme, with a view to presenting a report containing analysis and options to the next session of the Governing Council/Global Ministerial Environment Forum;

3. Requests the Committee of Permanent Representatives as the subsidiary body of the Governing Council/Global Ministerial Environmental Forum to provide its due contribution to this process in an expeditious manner;

4. Requests the Executive Director, in consultation with governments to review the state of international environmental governance and elaborate a report to be submitted to the Intergovernmental Group at its first meeting;

5. Decides that the process should benefit from incorporating the views and perspectives of other United Nations entities, international financial institutions, expert institutions, major groups, and individuals outside the United Nations system;

6. Decides that the next session of the Governing Council/Global Ministerial Environment Forum should undertake in depth discussion of the report with a view to providing its input on future requirements of international environmental governance in the broader context of multilateral efforts for sustainable development to the tenth session of the Commission on Sustainable Development acting as the preparatory body for the World Summit on Sustainable Development at its meeting at the Ministerial level in May 2002 as a contribution to the World Summit on Sustainable Development;

7. Requests the President of the Governing Council to inform the Commission on Sustainable Development, at its first session as the preparatory body of the World Summit on Sustainable Development, of this decision of the Council and of the views expressed by Ministers of the Environment on international environmental governance at this session of the Governing Council/Global Ministerial Environment Forum;

8. Requests the Executive Director to seek additional financial resources from governments in a position to contribute to supporting this process in particular to facilitate the participation of developing country representatives.